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RIVERSIDE COUNTY

Ex-lawmaker charged in wife's suicide

Complaint says Steve Clute provided gun former UCR educator used to kill herself

By Brian Rokos
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Former California Assemblyman Steve Clute has been charged with helping his wife, renowned UC Riverside math educator Pam Clute, commit suicide in 2016.

The felony charge is aiding or abetting suicide. An adult California resident can receive assistance in taking his own life, but only if certified as terminally ill and a physician prescribes lethal drugs after multiple requests from the patient.

Clute is charged with giving a handgun to his wife that she used to kill herself, said John Hall, a spokesman for the Riverside County District Attorney's Office.

Steve Clute

The criminal complaint against him was filed Nov. 30 without any announcement from the District Attorney's Office. Clute is due in Superior Court in Indio on Wednesday for an arraignment.

Pam Clute, 66, was in "severe, severe" pain from a degenerative back condition, said Virginia Blumenthal, the noted Riverside defense attorney who is representing Steve Clute.

The charge, as well as Monday's revelations from Hall and Blumenthal, come after more than a year of public speculation about Pam Clute's death at her Palm Desert home on Aug. 21, 2016, including whether her health was a factor, the cause of death, and at whose hand, if anyone's, she died.

The original cause was listed on Clute's death certificate as "pending," and the Sheriff's Department repeatedly declined to release that information until October 2017. The death certificate now says she died from a gunshot wound.

The coroner's office has repeatedly rejected requests from this publication for the autopsy report. On Monday, sheriff's Lt. April Smith, without providing an explanation, declined to make the report available, a coroner's spokeswoman said.

Attempts to reach Steve Clute for comment Monday were not

CLUTE » PAGE 2

WASHINGTON

Supreme Court lets travel ban take effect

Enforcement allowed as legal challenges continue

By Mark Sherman
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON » The Supreme Court on Monday allowed the Trump administration to fully enforce a ban on travel to the United States by residents of six mostly Muslim countries.

Trump

This is not a final ruling on the travel ban: Challenges to the policy are winding through the federal courts, and the justices themselves ultimately are expected to rule on its legality.

But the action indicates that the high court might eventually approve the latest version of the ban, announced by President Donald Trump in September. Lower courts have continued to find problems with the policy.

White House spokesman Hogan Gidley said the White House is "not surprised by today's Supreme Court decision permitting immediate enforcement of the President's proclamation limiting travel from countries presenting heightened risks of terrorism."

Opponents of this and previous versions of the ban say they show a bias against Muslims. They say that was reinforced most recently by Trump's retweets of anti-Muslim videos.

"President Trump's anti-Muslim prejudice is no secret. He has repeatedly confirmed it, including just last week on Twitter. It's unfortunate that the full ban can move forward for now, but this order does not address the merits of our claims," said Omar Jadwat, director of the American Civil Liberties Union's Immigrants' Rights Project.

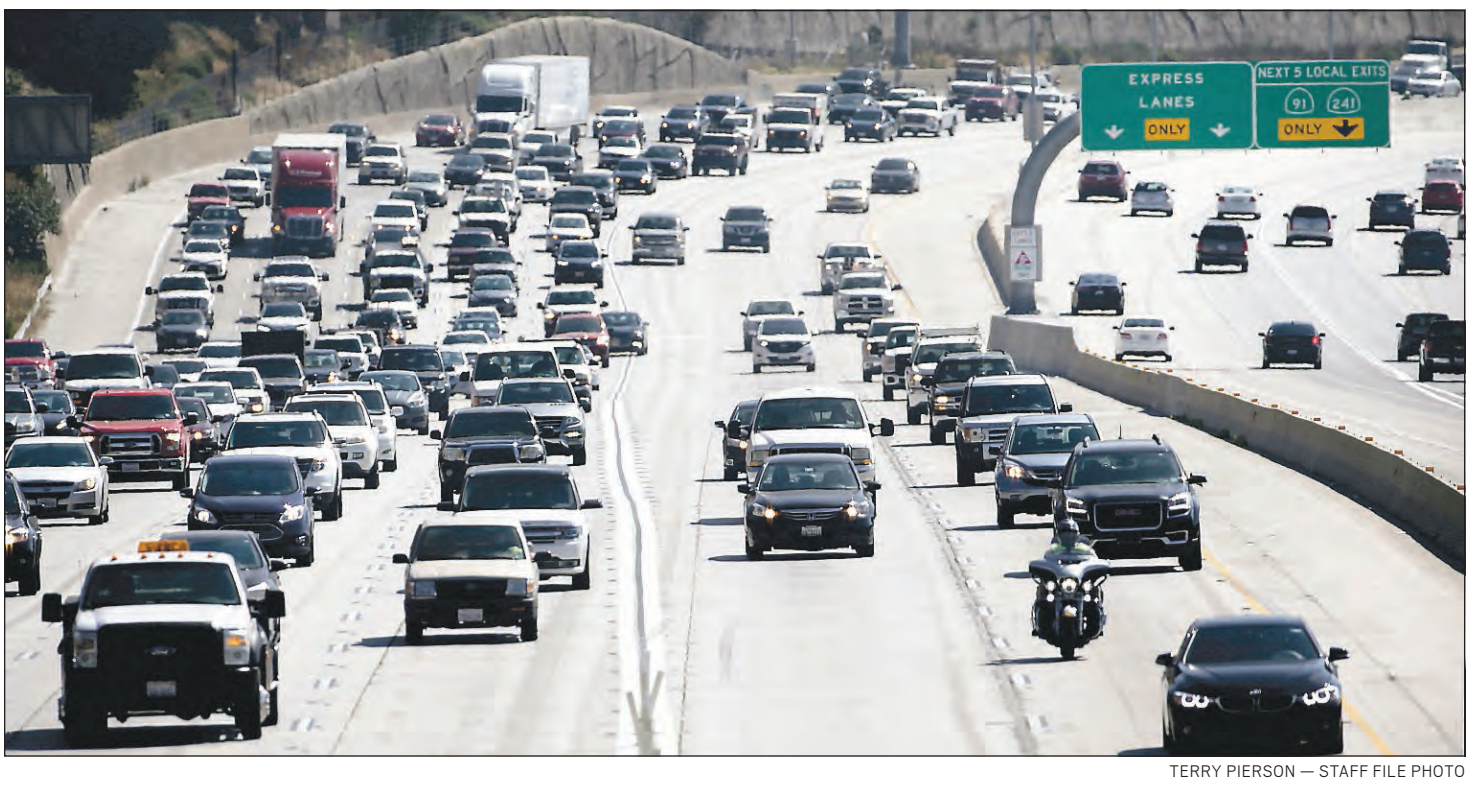
The ACLU is representing some opponents of the ban.

Just two justices, Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Sonia Sotomayor, noted their disagreement with court orders allowing the latest policy to take full effect.

The new policy is not expected to cause the chaos that ensued at

TRAVEL » PAGE 2

TRANSPORTATION



TERRY PIERSON — STAFF FILE PHOTO

A planned connector would link the 241 toll road and 91 Express Lanes. A committee composed of seven OCTA board members has raised concerns about the proposed ramp, saying it would increase congestion in the 91 Express Lanes.

CONGESTION FEARS

Key panel calls for pause in plans for ramp that would connect Express Lanes with toll road

By Sean Emery
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SANTA ANA » Orange County Transportation Authority staffers fearful of increased congestion on the 91 and the adjacent 91 Express Lanes want 241 toll road leaders to pump the brakes on plans for a $180 million ramp linking the 241 and the Express Lanes.

And an executive committee, composed of seven OCTA board members, on Monday backed that opposition, preferring that the Transportation Corridor Agencies, which manages the 241, defer any work on the planned connector.

Leaders of the Riverside County Transportation Commission have raised similar concerns about the elaborate ramp increasing traffic and congestion.

"We are very concerned about the impact the project will have on (91) corridor travelers who have borne construction delays as well as increasing traffic volume in the corridor," that agency's executive director, Anne Mayer, wrote in a recent letter to 241 toll leaders.

The project would create a clear shot from the 241, which runs between south and north Orange County along its eastern side, to the 91 Express Lanes that roll along the middle of the 91 into Riverside County, bypassing typical freeway traffic the entire route for those willing to pay tolls.

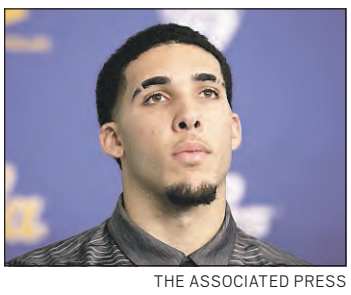
The Transportation Corridor Agencies touts the 241/91 connector as a way to decrease congestion, create greater efficiency for toll lanes, and improve safety.

Now, rush-hour commuters willing to pay tolls between the Inland Empire and central and south Orange County must make a choice: take the 91 Express Lanes and pass

FREEWAY » PAGE 5

BASKETBALL

LaVar Ball to pull son LiAngelo out of UCLA


THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

UCLA freshman guard LiAngelo Ball apologized last month after a shoplifting scandal in China.

By Thuc Nhi Nguyen
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LaVar Ball was always vocal in saying all three of his sons will only spend one season in college before going to the NBA. His second son, LiAngelo, didn't even make it one official game in a UCLA jersey.

The famous patriarch of the Ball family told reporters Monday he will be pulling LiAngelo, a freshman guard at UCLA, from the school in the midst of an indefinite suspension stemming from a shoplifting scandal in China last month.

After the news was first reported by TMZ, LaVar Ball told ESPN's Jeff Goodman, "We are exploring other options with Gelo.

"He's out of there," Ball told ESPN.

The younger Ball and fellow freshman teammates Cody Riley and Jalen Hill were suspended indefinitely from the basketball team after they admitted to shoplifting in China last month. They were not allowed to practice, travel with the team or suit up for games during the suspension, which was contingent on an ongoing investigation by UCLA's Office of Student Conduct.

"We respect the decision he and his family have made, and

BALL » PAGE 5

FORECAST

Gusty winds to bring summertime heat

By Lauren Williams
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Parts of Southern California could see gusts reaching 80 mph this week, with residents asked to take extra precautions to avoid any uncontrolled fires.

The windiest times of the week could be through this morning, with the Los Angeles Basin enduring gusts of 35 mph. The foothills, including such stretches as Pasadena, however, could experience even stronger winds.

Less-populated areas will see the strongest gusts, with Rialto, Fontana and other communities likely to get them at 55-60 mph, said Brandt Maxwell, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service. Santa Ana and Riverside are tabbed for 45 mph.

The gusts come as Southern California has caught a frac-

WINDS » PAGE 2

Santa Ana winds blow through Falcon Ridge Town Center in Fontana on Monday. The city could see gusts up to 60 mph this week.

JOHN VALENZUELA — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

INSIDE

Inland area has holiday hub
UPS is again using San Bernardino International Airport to get Christmas gifts to online shoppers across the globe. **LOCAL 1**

Need a job? Keep truckin'
The industry is still a top option for those in the Inland area who don't have a four-year college degree. **BUSINESS ON NEWS 6**

Playoff picture improving for Rams
With Sunday's victory over the Cardinals, the Rams proved they're a good team that can win even if they're not at the top of their game, columnist Vincent Bonsignore says. **SPORTS**

68/45 Riverside | Temecula: 70/40 | Desert: 72/54 | Mountains: 50/27

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